

**State Agencies, Employees Awarded for Excellence in Business with
California Certified Small and Disabled Veteran
Businesses**

On Thursday, January 14, 2016, the Department of General Services (DGS) held its 16th annual State Agency Recognition Award's (SARA) ceremony at the Scottish Rite Masonic Center in Sacramento, California. DGS recognized 63 state departments and 16 state employees for their outstanding work with California Small Businesses (SBs) and Disabled Veteran Business Enterprises (DVBEs). This year DGS introduced two new special awards; the Richard G. Polanco Diversity Outreach Award and the Collaboration Award of Contracting Excellence.

The State Agency Recognition Awards (SARA) honors state departments and employees for their best practices, creativity, and outstanding achievements to advance California's SB and DVBE programs.

State agencies work to meet an annual goal of 25% of purchasing and contracting with SBs. Additionally, California's Veterans and Military Code's goal is to purchase at least three percent from DVBEs.

The agencies receiving top honors at the award ceremony were:

Governor's Award – Department of General Services

Government Operations Agency Secretary's Special Achievement Award – Nina Martinez, California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation

Small Business Advocate Innovation Award

- Marie Ramos, Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
- Curtis Dickinson, Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Richard G. Polanco Diversity Outreach Award – Department of General Services, Outreach Team

Most Notable Improvement for Small Business (SB) Contracting -

- *Extra Small Agency* – State Independent Living Council

- *Small Agency* – California Tahoe Conservancy
- *Medium Agency* – Office of Statewide Health Planning & Development
- *Large Agency* – California State University, Chico
- *Extra Large Agency* – California Highway Patrol

Most Notable Improvement for Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise (DVBE) Contracting

- *Extra Small Agency* – Board of Pilot Commissioners
- *Small Agency* – Department of Community Services & Development
- *Medium Agency* – Department of Housing & Community Development
- *Large Agency* – State Controller’s Office
- *Extra Large Agency* – Department of General Services

State Agency Recognition Award

- *Platinum* – Department of Veterans Affairs
- *Gold* – Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
- *Silver* – California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Headquarters
- *Bronze* – Office of Statewide Health Planning & Development

Advocate of the Year

- *Platinum* – Lisa Tackett, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation – Kern Valley State Prison
- *Gold* – Steven Martinez, Department of Transportation, District 10
- *Silver* – Sam Venero, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation – Ironwood State Prison
- *Bronze* – Lynette Hall, California Public Employees’ Retirement System and Sammy Wong, Department of Parks and Recreation

Collaboration Award of Contracting Excellence

- Barry S. Johnson, Shooting Star Solutions, LLC

- Jason Schwartz, i3 Tech Data Solutions, Inc.
- Roberto Herrera, Department of Veterans Affairs-Veterans Services

John K. Lopez Awards presented by California Department of Veterans Affairs

- *Individual Excellence*- Rene Cota, DVBE Alliance
- *Business Excellence*-Global Blue DVBE